

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 2252

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV VT RO
SUBJ: STATUS OF VATICAN-ROMANIAN NEGOTIATIONS
REF: ROME 4437

1. IN NATO DCM MEETING OF APRIL 4, ITALIA COUNSELOR
REPORTED THAT FATHER BUKOVSKY HAS BEEN IN BUCHAREST SINCE
MARCH 31, BUT FOR INSTALLATION OF NEW ORDINARY BISHOP IN
IASI DIOCESE RATHER THAN STATUTO. AS SOURCE UNDERSTOOD IT,
NEGOTIATIONS ON STATUS ARE IN ABEYANCE FOR TIME BEING. GOR
HAD ASKED VATICAN TO HELP PREPARE DOCUMENT COVERING WHOLE
SPECTRUM OF RELEVANT QUESTIONS; VATICAN HAD LIMITED ITSELF
TO "PURE CHURCH" ISSUES AND ASKED GOR TO SUBMIT DRAFT ON
OTHERS; AND TALKS ARE SUSPENDED BECAUSE GOR WOULD STILL
PREFER TO DEAL WITH COMPREHENSIVE VATICAN DRAFT.

2. IN CHARGE'S COURTESY CALL APRIL 4 ON DEPARTMENT'S
CULTS DIRECTOR POPESCU, LATTER SAID BUKOSVKY IS IN TOWN
MAINLYFOR IASI INSTALLATION BUT HAS IN FACT ALSO BEEN IN
TOUCH WITH ROMANIAN AILTHORITIES CONCERNING STATUTO. (POPESCU
CAREFULLY EXPLAINED THAT DISCUSION FORMALLYTAKES PLACE BE-
TWEEN ROMANIAN CATHOLICS--THE ONLY ONE OF THE FOURTEEN RECOG-
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NIZED DENOMINATIONS WITHOUT A STATUTE--AND GOR, WITH VATICAN
"ADVISING" LOCAL HIERARCHY.) HOWEVER, POPESCU'S DESCRIPTION
OF SITUATION APPEARS TO CONFIRM ITALIAN EMBASSY'S IMPRESSION
THAT TALKS ARE DEAD IN WATER, AND FOR SAME REASON: IDEAS BEING
DISCUSSED HAVE SO FAR BEEN LIMITED TO "CHURCH MATTERS" ONLY,
AND FINAL STATUTE WILL HAVE TO TREAT ALL ISSUES, INCLUDING
SCHOOLS, RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND THE LIKE. ASKED WHAT WOULD

GIVE LEGAL FORCE TO ANY STATUTE WHICH MAY EVENTUALLY BE AGREED, POPESCU SAID APPROVAL OF DEPARTMENT OF CULTS, CONFIRMING THAT PROVISIONS WERE IN ACCORDANCE WITH ROMANIAN LAW; GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED. ASKED ABOUT FORMER UNIATES, POPESCU INSISTED ISSUE WAS CLOSED, AND HAS NOT BEEN RAISED EITHER FORMALLY OR INFORMALLY IN CURRENT TALKS.

3. COMMENT. POPESCU IS STILL DIRECTOR RATHER THAN DEPUTY CHAIRMAN OF CULTS DEPARTMENT, I.E. HE HAS NOT FORMALLY REPLACED NENCIU, AND SAID THAT CHAIRMAN ROSIANU IS STILL RECOVERING FROM SERIOUS ILLNESS. HOWEVER, WE DOUBT PERSONNAL SITUATION IN DEPARTMENT OR GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR POSTPONEMENT OF BUKOVSKY/POGGI VISIT REPORTED REFTEL, OR FOR GINGERLY CHARACTER OF CURRENT DISCUSSIONS, SINCE QUESTION OF WHO GOES FIRST IN STATUTO DRAFTING PROCESS SEEMS TO US TO PROVIDE MORE THAN ADEQUATE EXPLANATION FOR TIME BEING.
SIMONS

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